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ABSTRACT

This book presents a case study that describes the difficulties involved in collaborative efforts between public school bureaucracies and university teacher-education organizations. The book is situated in the larger context of educational reform. Each chapter is centered around the question of how to overcome the intractability of bureaucracy, especially when reforms involve the collaboration of bureaucratic organizations. Based on this conceptual framework, the book delineates procedures for organizational learning through an examination of Project Co-STAAR (Collaborative School to Achieve Academic Restructuring), a cooperative venture between the Dade County, Florida, schools and the College of Education at Florida International University to create a public relief school. Data were obtained through interviews, participant observation, and in situ diagnosis of the 2-year negotiation process. The first chapter explores the conditions within schools that perpetuate the status quo, particularly, the lack of clear goals, dissolution of communities, and lack of full participation. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the methodology. Chapter 3 presents the history and context of the project using a semiotic approach to describe the process, events, words, behaviors, and objects that carry meaning for members of the two communities. A description of the process of the project from early formal and informal meetings through subcommittee work between counterparts from the two organizations is presented in the fourth chapter. Chapter 5 describes the complications of negotiation, and the sixth chapter examines resistance to change. Chapter 7 compares the final proposal with the project's formative needs, goals, and objectives. Chapter 8 calls for advancing community solutions for a redefined school community. The final chapter analyzes some issues and concerns of leadership, organizational behavior, team membership, problem solving, communication, and conflict resolution. Eight figures and an index are included. (Contains 76 references.) (LMI)